



108

Greatest Of All Times

*globally selected
PERSONALITIES*

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Compiled by:
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19 Jun 1945 <::><::><::> 79 Years



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19 Jun 1945



79 Years

Aung San Suu Kyi
Nobel Peace Prize 1991

Born: 19 June 1945, Rangoon, Burma (now Yangon, Myanmar)

Residence at the time of the award: Burma (now Myanmar)

Prize motivation:

"for her non-violent struggle for democracy and human rights"

Prize share: 1/1

<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1991/kyi/facts/>

<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1991/kyi/biographical/>



Aung San Suu Kyi

Myanmar democracy icon who fell from grace

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-11685977>



She was once seen as a beacon for human rights - a principled activist who gave up her freedom to challenge the ruthless army generals who ruled Myanmar for decades.

In 1991, Aung San Suu Kyi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, while still under house arrest, and hailed as "an outstanding example of the power of the powerless".

In 2015, she led her National League for Democracy (NLD) to victory in Myanmar's first openly contested election in 25 years. But she was deposed by a coup in 2021 when the military took control and arrested her and the political leadership around her.

- **Myanmar coup: What is happening and why?**

While her image had suffered internationally due to her response to the crisis that befell Myanmar's mostly Muslim Rohingya minority, she remains hugely popular with the country's Buddhist majority.

Path to power

Ms Suu Kyi spent nearly 15 years in detention between 1989 and 2010. Her personal struggle to bring democracy to then military-ruled Myanmar (also known as Burma) - made her an international symbol of peaceful resistance in the face of oppression.

Despite her landslide victory in 2015, the Myanmar constitution forbade her from becoming president because she has children who are foreign nationals. But Ms Suu Kyi, now 75, was widely seen as de facto leader.



The Obama administration lifted sanctions on Myanmar in return for democratic reforms

Her official title was state counsellor. The President until the 2021 coup, Win Myint, was a close aide.

In 2020, her NLD once again won a landslide majority, getting even more votes than in the 2015 vote.

The still powerful military disputed the results, claiming election fraud. On the day parliament was to sit for the first time, the military arrested Ms Suu Kyi along with many other political leaders.

It then declared a state of emergency, handing power to the military for a full year.

Ms Suu Kyi was later charged with illegally importing communications equipment. Police said they found seven walkie-talkie radios in her home which she was not authorised to possess.

Political pedigree

Ms Suu Kyi is the daughter of Myanmar's independence hero, General Aung San.

He was assassinated when she was only two years old, just before Myanmar gained independence from British colonial rule in 1948.

In 1960 she went to India with her mother Daw Khin Kyi, who had been appointed Myanmar's ambassador in Delhi.

Four years later she went to Oxford University in the UK, where she studied philosophy, politics and economics. There she met her future husband, academic Michael Aris.

After stints of living and working in Japan and Bhutan, she settled in the UK to raise their two children, Alexander and Kim, but Myanmar was never far from her thoughts.



Aung San Suu Kyi with Michael Aris and son Alexander in London in 1973

When she arrived back in Yangon in 1988 - to look after her critically ill mother - Myanmar was in the midst of major political upheaval.

Thousands of students, office workers and monks took to the streets demanding democratic reform.

"I could not as my father's daughter remain indifferent to all that was going on," she said in a speech in Yangon on 26 August 1988. She went on to lead the revolt against the then-dictator, General Ne Win.

House arrest

Inspired by the non-violent campaigns of US civil rights leader Martin Luther King and India's Mahatma Gandhi, she organised rallies and travelled around the country, calling for peaceful democratic reform and free elections.

But the demonstrations were brutally suppressed by the army, which seized power in a coup on 18 September 1988. Ms Suu Kyi was placed under house arrest the following year.

The military government called national elections in May 1990, which Ms Suu Kyi's NLD convincingly won - but the junta refused to hand over control.

Ms Suu Kyi remained under house arrest in Yangon for six years, until she was released in July 1995.

She was again put under house arrest in September 2000, when she tried to travel to the city of Mandalay in defiance of travel restrictions.

She was released unconditionally in May 2002, but just over a year later was imprisoned after a government-backed mob set upon her entourage in the north of the country. She escaped because of the swift action taken by her driver, but many of her supporters were savagely beaten and a number died.



Huge crowds greeted Aung San Suu Kyi on her release from house arrest in 2010

She was later allowed to return home - but again under effective house arrest.

At times she was able to meet other NLD officials and selected diplomats, but during the early years she was often in solitary confinement. She was not allowed to see her two sons or her husband, who died of cancer in March 1999.

The military authorities had offered to allow her to travel to the UK to see him when he was gravely ill, but she felt compelled to refuse for fear she would not be allowed back into the country.

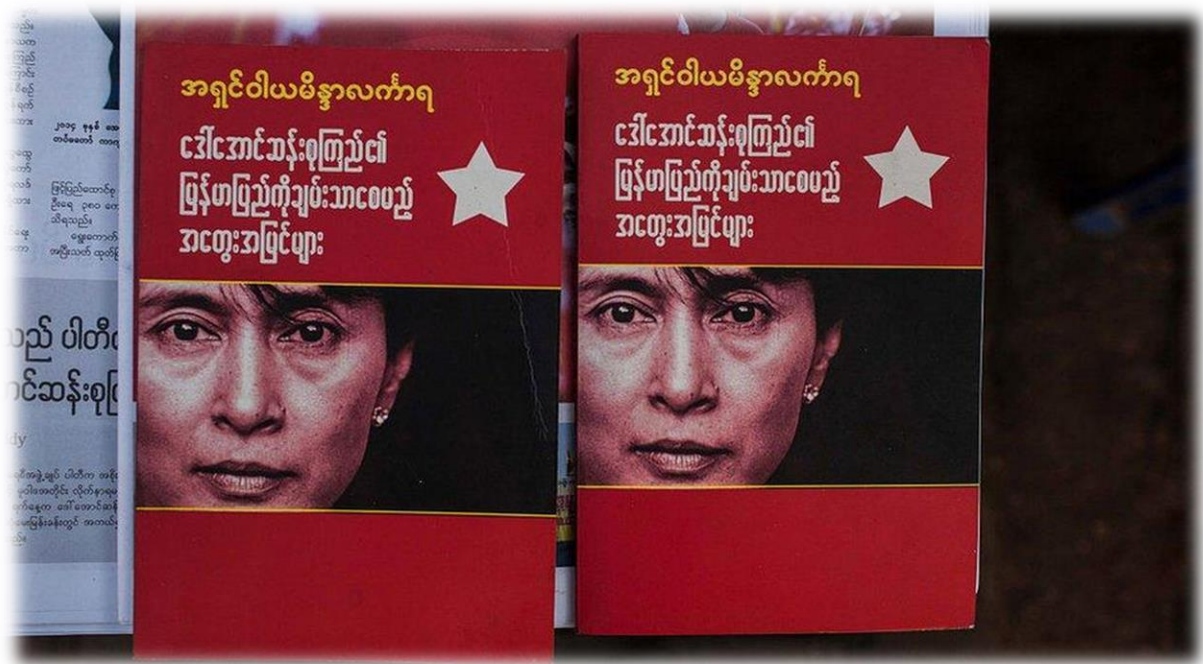
Re-entering politics

Ms Suu Kyi was side-lined from Myanmar's first elections in two decades on 7 November 2010 but released from house arrest six days later. Her son Kim was allowed to visit her for the first time in a decade.

As the new government embarked on a process of reform, Ms Suu Kyi and her party re-joined the political process.

They won 43 of the 45 seats contested in April 2012 by-elections, in an emphatic statement of support. Ms Suu Kyi was sworn in as an MP and leader of the opposition.

The following May, she left Myanmar for the first time in 24 years, in a sign of apparent confidence that its new leaders would allow her to return.



The NLD swept to victory in November 2015

The Rohingya crisis

Since becoming Myanmar's state counsellor, her leadership has been partly defined by the treatment of the country's mostly Muslim Rohingya minority.

In 2017 hundreds of thousands of Rohingya fled to neighbouring Bangladesh due to an army crackdown sparked by deadly attacks on police stations in Rakhine state.

Myanmar now faces a lawsuit accusing it of genocide at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), while the International Criminal Court is investigating the country for crimes against humanity.

Ms Suu Kyi's former international supporters accused her of doing nothing to stop rape, murder and possible genocide by refusing to condemn the still powerful military or acknowledge accounts of atrocities.

A few initially argued that she was a pragmatic politician, trying to govern a multi-ethnic country with a complex history.

But her personal defence of the army's actions at the ICJ hearing in the Hague was seen as a new turning point for her international reputation.

At home, however, "the Lady", as Ms Suu Kyi is known, remains wildly popular among the Buddhist majority who hold little sympathy for the Rohingya.

Stalled reforms

During her time in power Ms Suu Kyi and the NLD government also faced criticism for prosecuting journalists and activists using colonial-era laws.

While there was progress in some areas, the military continued to hold a quarter of parliamentary seats and controlled key ministries including defence, home affairs and border affairs.

In August 2018, Ms Suu Kyi described the generals in her cabinet as "rather sweet" and Myanmar's democratic transition, analysts said, appeared to have stalled.

The 2021 military coup came as the country was facing one of South East Asia's worst Covid-19 outbreaks, putting new strains on an already impoverished healthcare system as lockdown measures devastate livelihoods.

The coup triggered widespread demonstrations and Myanmar's military has cracked down on pro-democracy protesters, activists and journalists.

In December 2021, Ms Suu Kyi was found guilty of inciting dissent and breaking Covid rules in the first of a series of verdicts that could see her jailed for life. UN Human Rights chief Michelle Bachelet called it a "sham trial" that would only "deepen rejection of the coup".

Ms Suu Kyi faces 11 charges in total and denies them all.

Yet Ms Suu Kyi remains popular. A 2020 survey by the People's Alliance for Credible Elections, a watchdog, found that 79% of people had trust in her - up from 70% the previous year.

Derek Mitchell, former US Ambassador to Myanmar **told the BBC**: "The story of Aung San Suu Kyi is as much about us as it is about her. She may not have changed. She may have been consistent and we just didn't know the full complexity of who she is.

"We have to be mindful that we shouldn't endow people with some iconic image beyond which is human."

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In defence of

Aung San Suu Kyi

<https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/defence-aung-san-suu-kyi>

On 18 October 2023, the Brighton and Hove City Council in the United Kingdom revoked the Freedom of the City awarded to Burmese politician Aung San Suu Kyi in 2011. Their special meeting lasted only 18 minutes, with Councillor Bella Sankey, the Labour leader of the Council, [stating](#) that it was not right to honour a person who "presided over the ethnic cleansing and genocide of the Muslim Rohingya community" and was "an enabler to racial and religious discrimination and ethnic cleansing". Sankey was supported by all 50 or so of the Council members present.

This revocation was the latest act by Western institutions and human rights groups, at times inclined to zealotry and intolerance, to humiliate and punish Suu Kyi for her perceived failure to "speak out" against the persecution of the Rohingya Muslim ethnic minority in Myanmar. Yet not one of her critics has ever attempted to say why she supposedly did not speak out, nor offered any word of explanation other than, like Bob Geldof, to denigrate her as a "[handmaiden to genocide](#)".

Their main concern has been to [topple her](#) from the pedestal on which they put her, and not to seek to understand her fraught and fragile relationship with the military, which has led to her detention and imprisonment for more than three years.

This year, an invaluable compendium of documents was published by the American Buddhist scholar Alan Clements and his British colleague Fergus Harlow entitled "[Burma's Voices of Freedom](#)", which includes interviews, articles and speeches by Suu Kyi and several of her Burmese associates. The four-volume set offers a clear and persuasive narrative of her policies from a Burmese perspective, which would come as a complete surprise to many of her Western critics.

[Suu Kyi indeed acknowledged that she had not "spoken out" on the Rohingya crisis because to do so would only make matters worse.](#)

Suu Kyi's consistent approach over the years to the Rohingya – as on all issues – is inspired by the Buddhist virtues of loving kindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karunā*), empathetic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*). In practical terms it is based on:

1. Reconciliation, not condemnation. A refusal to take sides in the communal disturbances between Muslims and Buddhists in Rakhine State.
2. Cooperation with the military at all costs. A refusal to condemn publicly, but to search for a *modus vivendi* with the aim of securing their understanding and support for the country's political transition.
3. Determination not to endanger the prospects for democratic change after so many years of military rule, even at the risk of being seriously misunderstood in the West. Suu Kyi had discussions with a considerable number of Western politicians and personalities once she began to travel overseas in 2012. To some, she would undoubtedly have explained in confidence how fragile was her position, but publicly she did not dare make reference to this. Her spokesman, U Win Htein, confided to Clements on 10 April 2015 that Suu Kyi "did clearly express her position about the Rohingya, but what she expressed was that, if she spoke up for the Rohingya or advocated too heavily on their behalf, it would have unfavourable repercussions among the Burmese ... It might help the international community understand the situation, but it won't help Burma."

Suu Kyi indeed acknowledged that she had not "spoken out" on the Rohingya crisis because to do so would only make matters worse, sully her relations with the military, and endanger her very political existence. Yet this is what human rights organisations pressed her to do. Instead, Suu Kyi put the interests of her country before her personal reputation. In an interview with NHK World (Japan) on 6 October 2018, she stated, "I don't care about prizes and honours as such. I am sorry that friends are not as steadfast as they might be. Because I think friendship means understanding, basically, trying to understand rather than to just make your own judgement. But prizes come and prizes go."



**Aung San Suu Kyi (L), representing Myanmar,
during 2019 proceedings
at the International Court of Justice (ICJ)**

On her decision to represent Myanmar at the International Court of Justice on 11 December 2019, Suu Kyi's Burmese associates are [unanimous](#) that she did not go to The Hague to defend the military, but to appear as a representative of her country in their dispute with The Gambia, and to defend Myanmar's honour and dignity. The human rights activist and Harvard graduate Ma Thida Sanchuang said in January 2020: "But for the eyes of the general public, Aung San Suu Kyi took the lead to defend our country's image ... The general public's stand with her on the ICJ case was the signal ... to show how much they are still against the military and its party."

This is entirely opposite to most Western interpretations. Not surprisingly, many of Suu Kyi's closest collaborators have condemned what they see as seriously flawed Western criticism of her policies, especially on the Rohingya. U Win Htein commented: "They are false judgements. They are misperceptions. They are from the uninformed and misguided ... Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is one of the most compassionate people I have ever met." A senior Buddhist monk, the late Myawaddy Sayadaw Abbot of Mingyi Monastery, was even blunter in December 2017: "Wait and see. Only those who revoked the awards will lose their dignity in the end." And as Myanmar's version of Lady Gaga, Phyu Phyu Kyaw Thein, a Christian, noted in January 2020: "But one thing for sure is Daw Suu, as a devout Buddhist, forgives them for she knows that 'they know not what they say'."

One day soon, Suu Kyi may be free to put the record straight. Her detractors can then eat humble pie, if they have the moral courage.

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Chronology

<https://burmacampaign.org.uk/about-burma/a-biography-of-aung-san-suu-kyi/>

Aung San Suu Kyi has won numerous international awards, including the Nobel Peace Prize, the Sakharov Prize from the European Parliament and the United States Presidential Medal of Freedom. She has called on people around the world to join the struggle for freedom in Burma, saying "Please use your liberty to promote ours."

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CHRONOLOGY

1945:

Born in Rangoon on June 19th, the daughter of independence hero and national leader General Aung San and Daw Khin Kyi; General Aung San is assassinated July 19, 1947. Aung San Suu Kyi is educated in Rangoon until 15 years old.

1960:

Accompanies mother to Delhi on her appointment as Burmese ambassador to India and Nepal and studies politics at Delhi University.

1964-67:

BA in philosophy, politics and economics, St. Hugh's College, Oxford University. She is elected Honorary Fellow in 1990.

1969-71:

Assistant Secretary, Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, United Nations Secretariat, New York.

1972:

Research Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bhutan; married Dr. Michael Aris, a British scholar.

1973-77:

Birth of sons Alexander in London (1973) and Kim (1977) in Oxford.

1985-86:

Visiting Scholar, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University.

1987:

Fellow, Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, Simla.

1988 March:

Student protests break out in Rangoon.

1988 Jul 23:

General Ne Win steps down as Chairman of the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) after 26 years, triggering prodemocracy movement.

1988 Aug 8:

The famous 8-8-88 mass uprising starts in Rangoon and spreads to the entire country, drawing millions of people to protest against the BSPP government. The following military crackdown killed thousands.

1988 Aug 26:

Aung San Suu Kyi addresses half-million mass rally in front of the famous Shwedagon Pagoda in Rangoon and calls for a democratic government.

1988 Sep 18:

The military reestablishes its power and the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) is formed. The military again crushes the pro-democracy movement, killing hundreds more.

1988 Sep 24:

The National League for Democracy (NLD) is formed, with Aung San Suu Kyi as general secretary.

1988 Dec 27:

Daw Khin Kyi, mother of Aung San Suu Kyi, dies. The funeral procession draws a huge crowd of supporters, which turns into a peaceful protest against military rule.

1989 Jul 20:

Aung San Suu Kyi is placed under house arrest in Rangoon under martial law that allows for detention without charge or trial for three years.

1990 May 27:

Despite her continuing detention, the National League for Democracy wins a landslide victory in the general elections by securing 82 percent of the seats; the military junta refuses to recognise the results of the election.

1990 Oct 12:

Awarded, in absentia, the 1990 Rafto Human Rights Prize.

1991 Jul 10:

Awarded, in absentia, the 1990 Sakharov Prize (human rights prize of the European Parliament).

1991 Aug 10:

The military regime retroactively amends the law under which Aung San Suu Kyi is held to allow for detention for up to five years without charge or trial.

1991 Oct 14:

Awarded the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize.

1991 Dec 10:

Aung San Suu Kyi's 'Freedom from Fear' and other writings published in London.

1992:

The Nobel Committee reveals that Aung San Suu Kyi has established a health and education trust in support of the Burmese people to use the \$1.3 million prize money.

1994 Sep 20:

Gen. Than Shwe and Gen. Khin Nyunt of SLORC meet Aung San Suu Kyi for the first time since the house arrest.

1995 Jul 10:

The junta releases Aung San Suu Kyi from house arrest.

1995 Oct 10:

The NLD defied junta's ban on changes in party leadership positions and reappointed her as the party's General Secretary.

1999 Mar 27:

Aung San Suu Kyi's husband Michael Aris dies of prostate cancer in London. His last request to visit Aung San Suu Kyi, whom he had last seen in 1995, was rejected by the military junta which said if Aung San Suu Kyi wanted to leave the country she could do so. She refused the offer knowing that she would not be allowed to return to Burma.

1996-2000:

Aung San Suu Kyi defies travel bans imposed against her and continually tries to leave Rangoon. In March 1996, she boarded the train bound for Mandalay but citing a "last minute problem" the coach she was in was left behind at the station.

2000 Sep 02:

Around 200 riot police surrounded Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's motorcade near Dala and forced them to return to Rangoon after a nine-day standoff.

2000 Sep 23:

Aung San Suu Kyi is placed under house arrest.

2000 Oct:

Aung San Suu Kyi begins secret talks with the military junta. Substance of the talks remains secret, and UN Special Envoy Razali acts as a "facilitator."

2000 Dec 07:

US President Bill Clinton confers America's highest civilian honour on Aung San Suu Kyi. Her son Alexander Aris receives the award on her behalf.

2002 May 6:

Aung San Suu Kyi is freed after 19 months of house arrest.

2003 May 30:

During a tour of northern Burma, Aung San Suu Kyi and her supporters are attacked by the Union Solidarity Development Association (USDA), the regime's militia, in the town of Depayin. As many as 70 people were killed in the attack and over 100 people arrested, including Aung San Suu Kyi. Aung San Suu Kyi remained in secret detention for over three months.

2004 March:

Razali Ismail, UN special envoy to Burma, has his last meeting Aung San Suu Kyi.

2006 May 20:

Ibrahim Gambari, UN Undersecretary-General for Political Affairs, met Aung San Suu Kyi, the first visit by a foreign official since Razali's visit in 2004. Gambari met Aung San Suu Kyi again in November 2006 but his visit failed to secure any concessions from Burma's military regime.

2007 May 25:

Aung San Suu Kyi's term of house arrest was extended for another year.

2007 Sep 22:

Aung San Suu Kyi left her house to greet and pray with Buddhist monks outside her gate during the biggest demonstrations in Burma since the 1988 uprising. This is the first time she has been seen in public since 2003.

2007 Sep 30:

The UN special envoy Ibrahim Gambari meets Aung San Suu Kyi in Rangoon.

2007 Oct 24:

Aung San Suu Kyi reaches a total of 12 years in detention.

2007 Oct 25:

Aung San Suu Kyi meets the regime's newly appointed liaison officer, Aung Kyi, but no details of their discussion are made public.

2007 Nov 6:

Aung San Suu Kyi meets UN special envoy Ibrahim Gambari. Text of Aung San Suu Kyi's statement released by U.N. envoy 08 November 2007

2008 Jan 31:

Aung San Suu Kyi meets NLD leadership. She asked that they convey to the public the message that "We should hope for the best and prepare for the worst."

"What I can say is Daw Suu is not satisfied with the current meetings with the junta, especially the fact that the process is not time-bound," NLD spokesperson Nyan Win said, referring to the lack of a time frame for the talks to achieve any results.

2008 Mar 8:

Aung San Suu Kyi meets UN special envoy Ibrahim Gambari.

2009 Feb 20:

Gambari meets jointly with Aung San Suu Kyi and members of the National League for Democracy.

2009 Mar 24:

The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention issues a judgment declaring that the ongoing detention of Aung San Suu Kyi is illegal and in violation of both Burmese and international law.

2009 May 14:

Aung San Suu Kyi is arrested and charged with breaking the terms of her house arrest, which forbids visitors, after John Yettaw, a United States citizen, swam across Inya lake and refused to leave her house.

2009 May 18:

Aung San Suu Kyi's trial begins, held in closed-door hearings inside Insein prison. Aung San Suu Kyi's two companions and John Yettaw are also on trial.

2009 Jun 26:

Aung San Suu Kyi meets UN special envoy Ibrahim Gambari.

2009 Jul 03:

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon visits Burma but is not allowed to meet Aung San Suu Kyi.

2009 Aug 11:

Aung San Suu Kyi is found guilty and sentenced to 18 months under house arrest.

2009 Oct 03:

Aung San Suu Kyi meets SPDC Liaison Minister Major General Aung Kyi.

2009 Oct 09:

Aung San Suu Kyi meets the UK Ambassador and the deputy heads of the Australian and US missions in Burma.

2009 Oct 24:

Aung San Suu Kyi reaches a total of 14 years in detention, most of it under house arrest.

2009 Nov 04:

Aung San Suu Kyi meets a US delegation led by Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell.

2009 Dec 09:

Aung San Suu Kyi meets SPDC Liaison Minister Major General Aung Kyi.

2009 Dec 16:

Aung San Suu Kyi meets NLD party leaders Aung Shwe, U Lwin and Lun Tin.

2010 Jan 15:

Aung San Suu Kyi meets SPDC Liaison Minister Major General Aung Kyi.

2010 Feb 01:

The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention issues a judgment declaring that the ongoing detention of Aung San Suu Kyi is illegal and in violation of both Burmese and international law.

2010 Mar 08:

The country's state-run newspapers publish the election laws, which ban Aung San Suu Kyi from taking part in the fake election. Click here for more information.

2010 May 06:

National League for Democracy Party in Burma is banned.

2010 May 10:

Aung San Suu Kyi meets a US delegation led by Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell.

2010 Oct 24:

Aung San Suu Kyi reaches a total of 15 years in detention, most of it under house arrest.

2010 Nov 13:

Aung San Suu Kyi is released from detention.

2011 July 25:

Aung San Suu Kyi meets Burma Labour Minister Aung Kyi.

2011 Aug 12:

Aung San Suu Kyi meets Burma Labour Minister Aung Kyi.

2011 Aug 19:

Aung San Suu Kyi meets Burma's president Thein Sein.

2012 April 1:

Aung San Suu Kyi wins a seat in the by-election. The National League for Democracy (NLD) win 43 out of the 45 seats contested in the by-election.

2012 April 11:

Aung San Suu Kyi meets President Thein Sein for the second time.

2012 May 29:

Aung San Suu Kyi visits Thailand, the first time she has left Burma in 24 years.

2012 June 13-29:

Aung San Suu Kyi makes a three-week tour of Europe in June, visiting Switzerland, Norway, Ireland, UK and France. It was the first time she is able to travel to Europe in 24 years.

2012 July 25:

Aung San Suu Kyi makes her first speech in parliament. She calls for laws to protect ethnic minority rights.



Iowa State University

Archives of Women's Political Communication

<https://awpc.cattcenter.iastate.edu/2017/03/21/opening-keynote-address-at-ngo-forum-on-women-aug-31-1995/>

Opening Keynote Address at NGO Forum on Women

Aug. 31, 1995

Aung San Suu Kyi

August 31, 1995— Beijing, China

NGO Forum on Women

It is a wonderful but daunting task that has fallen on me to say a few words by way of opening this Forum, the greatest concourse of women (joined by a few brave men!) that has ever gathered on our planet. I want to try and voice some of the common hopes which firmly unite us in all our splendid diversity.

But first I would like to explain why I cannot be with you in person today. Last month I was released from almost six years of house arrest. The regaining of my freedom has in turn imposed a duty on me to work for the freedom of other women and men in my country who have suffered far more - and who continue to suffer far more - than I have. It is this duty which prevents me from joining you today. Even sending this message to you has not been without difficulties. But the help of those who believe in international cooperation and freedom of expression has enabled me to overcome the obstacles. They made it possible for me to make a small contribution to this great celebration of the struggle of women to mould their own destiny and to influence the fate of our global village.

The opening plenary of this Forum will be presenting an overview of the global forces affecting the quality of life of the human community and the challenges they pose for the global community as a whole and for women in particular as we approach the twenty-first century. However, with true womanly understanding the Convener of this Forum suggested that among these global forces and challenges, I might wish to concentrate on those matters which occupy all my waking thoughts these days: peace, security, human rights and democracy. I would like to discuss these issues particularly in the context of the participation of women in politics and governance.

For millennia women have dedicated themselves almost exclusively to the task of nurturing, protecting and caring for the young and the old, striving for the conditions of peace that favour life as a whole. To this can be added the fact that, to the best of my knowledge, no war was ever started by women. But it is women and children who have always suffered most in situations of conflict. Now that we are gaining control of the primary historical role imposed on us of sustaining life in the context of the home and family, it is time to apply in the arena of the world the wisdom and experience thus gained in activities of peace over so many thousands of years. The education and empowerment of women throughout the world cannot fail to result in a more caring, tolerant, just and peaceful life for all.

If to these universal benefits of the growing emancipation of women can be added the "peace dividend" for human development offered by the end of the Cold War, spending less on the war toys of grown men and much more on the urgent needs of humanity as a whole, then truly the next millennia will be an age the like to which has never been seen in human history. But there still remain many obstacles to be overcome before we can achieve this goal. And not least among these obstacles are intolerance and insecurity.

This year is the International Year for Tolerance. The United Nations has recognized that "tolerance, human rights, democracy and peace are closely related. Without tolerance, the foundations for democracy and respect for human rights cannot be strengthened, and the achievements of peace will remain elusive". My own experience during the years I have been engaged in the democracy movement in Burma has convinced me of the need to emphasize the positive aspects of tolerance. It is not enough simply to "live and let live": genuine tolerance requires an active effort to try to understand the point of view of others; it implies broad-mindedness and vision, as well as confidence in one's own ability to meet new challenges without resorting to intransigence or violence. In societies where men are truly confident of their own worth women are not merely "tolerated", they are valued. Their opinions are listened to with respect, they are given their rightful place in shaping the society in which they live.

There is an outmoded Burmese proverb still recited by men, who wish to deny that women too can play a part in bringing necessary change and progress to their society: "The dawn rises only when the rooster crows". But Burmese people today are well aware of the scientific reason behind the rising of dawn and the falling of dusk. And the intelligent rooster surely realizes that it is because dawn comes that it crows and not the other way round. It crows to welcome the light that has come to relieve the darkness of night. It is not the prerogative of men alone to bring light to this world: women with their capacity for compassion and self-sacrifice, their courage and perseverance, have done much to dissipate the darkness of intolerance and hate, suffering and despair.

Often the other side of the coin of intolerance is insecurity. Insecure people tend to be intolerant, and their intolerance unleashes forces that threaten the security of others. And where there is no security there can be no lasting peace. In its Human Development Report for last year, the UNDP noted that human security "is not a concern with weapons - it is a concern with human life and dignity". The struggle for democracy and human rights in Burma is a struggle for life and dignity. It is a struggle that encompasses our political, social and economic aspirations. The people of my country want the two freedoms that spell security: freedom from want and freedom from war. It is want that has driven so many of our young girls across our borders to a life of sexual slavery where they are subject to constant humiliation and ill-treatment. It is fear of persecution for their political beliefs that has made so many of our people feel that even in their own homes they cannot live in dignity and security.

Traditionally the home is the domain of the woman. But there has never been a guarantee that she can live out her life there safe and unmolested. There are countless women who are subjected to severe cruelty within the heart of the family which should be their haven. And in times of crisis when their men folk are unable to give them protection, women have to face the harsh challenges of the world outside while continuing to discharge their duties within the home.

Many of my male colleagues who have suffered imprisonment for their part in the democracy movement have spoken of the great debt of gratitude they owe their womenfolk, particularly their wives, who stood by them firmly, tender as mothers nursing their newly born, brave as lionesses defending their young. These magnificent human beings who have done so much to aid their men in the struggle for justice and peace - how much more could they not achieve if given the opportunity to work in their own right for the good of their country and of the world?

Our endeavours have also been sustained by the activities of strong and principled women all over the world who have campaigned not only for my own release but, more importantly, for our cause. I cannot let this opportunity pass without speaking of the gratitude we feel towards our sisters everywhere, from heads of governments to busy housewives. Their efforts have been a triumphant demonstration of female solidarity and of the power of an ideal to cross all frontiers.

In my country at present, women have no participation in the higher levels of government and none whatsoever in the judiciary. Even within the democratic movement only 14 out of the 485 MPs elected in 1990 were women - all from my own party, the National League for Democracy. These 14 women represent less than 3 percent of the total number of successful candidates. They, like their male colleagues, have not been permitted to take office since the outcome of those elections has been totally ignored. Yet the very high performance of

women in our educational system and in the management of commercial enterprises proves their enormous potential to contribute to the betterment of society in general. Meanwhile our women have yet to achieve those fundamental rights of free expression, association and security of life denied also to their men folk.

The adversities that we have had to face together have taught all of us involved in the struggle to build a truly democratic political system in Burma that there are no gender barriers that cannot be overcome. The relationship between men and women should, and can be, characterized not by patronizing behavior or exploitation, but by metta (that is to say loving kindness), partnership and trust. We need mutual respect and understanding between men and women, instead of patriarchal domination and degradation, which are expressions of violence and engender counter-violence. We can learn from each other and help one another to moderate the "gender weaknesses" imposed on us by traditional or biological factors.

There is an age old prejudice the world over to the effect that women talk too much. But is this really a weakness? Could it not in fact be a strength? Recent scientific research on the human brain has revealed that women are better at verbal skills while men tend towards physical action. Psychological research has shown on the other hand that disinformation engendered by men has far more damaging effect on its victims than feminine gossip. Surely these discoveries indicate that women have a most valuable contribution to make in situations of conflict, by leading the way to solutions based on dialogue rather than on viciousness or violence?

The Buddhist pavarana ceremony at the end of the rainy season retreat was instituted by the Lord Buddha, who did not want human beings to live in silence [I quote] "like dumb animals". This ceremony, during which monks ask mutual forgiveness for any offence given during the retreat, can be said to be a council of truth and reconciliation. It might also be considered a forerunner of that most democratic of institutions, the parliament, a meeting of peoples gathered together to talk over their shared problems. All the world's great religions are dedicated to the generation of happiness and harmony. This demonstrates the fact that together with the combative instincts of man there co-exists a spiritual aspiration for mutual understanding and peace.

This forum of non-governmental organizations represents the belief in the ability of intelligent human beings to resolve conflicting interests through exchange and dialogue. It also represents the conviction that governments alone cannot resolve all the problems of their countries. The watchfulness and active cooperation of organizations outside the spheres of officialdom are necessary to ensure the four essential components of the human development paradigm as identified by the UNDP: productivity, equity, sustainability and empowerment. The last is particularly relevant: it requires that "development

must be by people, not only for them. People must participate fully in the decisions and processes that shape their lives." In other words people must be allowed to play a significant role in the governance of the country. And "people" include women who make up at least half of the world's population.

The last six years afforded me much time and food for thought. I came to the conclusion that the human race is not divided into two opposing camps of good and evil. It is made up of those who are capable of learning and those who are incapable of doing so. Here I am not talking of learning in the narrow sense of acquiring an academic education, but of learning as the process of absorbing those lessons of life that enable us to increase peace and happiness in our world. Women in their roles as mothers have traditionally assumed the responsibility of teaching children values that will guide them throughout their lives. It is time we were given the full opportunity to use our natural teaching skills to contribute towards building a modern world that can withstand the tremendous challenges of the technological revolution which has in turn brought revolutionary changes in social values.

As we strive to teach others we must have the humility to acknowledge that we too still have much to learn. And we must have the flexibility to adapt to the changing needs of the world around us. Women who have been taught that modesty and pliancy are among the prized virtues of our gender are marvelously equipped for the learning process. But they must be given the opportunity to turn these often merely passive virtues into positive assets for the society in which they live.

These, then, are our common hopes that unite us -- that as the shackles of prejudice and intolerance fall from our own limbs we can together strive to identify and remove the impediments to human development everywhere. The mechanisms by which this great task is to be achieved provided the proper focus of this great Forum. I feel sure that women throughout the world who, like me, cannot be with you join me now in sending you all our prayers and good wishes for a joyful and productive meeting.



Iowa State University

Archives of Women's Political Communication

<https://awpc.cattcenter.iastate.edu/2017/03/21/freedom-from-fear-1990/>

Aung San Suu Kyi

January 01, 1990

In commemoration of winning the 1990 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought

It is not power that corrupts but fear. Fear of losing power corrupts those who wield it and fear of the scourge of power corrupts those who are subject to it. Most Burmese are familiar with the four a-gati, the four kinds of corruption. Chanda-gati, corruption induced by desire, is deviation from the right path in pursuit of bribes or for the sake of that one love. Dosa-gati is taking the wrong path to spite those against whom one bears ill will, and moga-gati is aberration due to ignorance. But perhaps the worst of the four is bhaya-gati, for not only does bhaya, fear, stifle and slowly destroy all sense of right and wrong, it so often lies at the root of the other three kinds of corruption. Just as chanda-gati, when not the result of sheer avarice, can be caused by fear of want or fear of losing the goodwill of those one loves, so fear of being surpassed, humiliated or injured in some way can provide the impetus for ill will. And it would be difficult to dispel ignorance unless there is freedom to pursue the truth unfettered by fear. With so close a relationship between fear and corruption it is little wonder that in any society where fear is rife corruption in all forms becomes deeply entrenched.

Public dissatisfaction with economic hardships has been seen as the chief cause of the movement for democracy in Burma, sparked off by the student demonstrations 1988. It is true that years of incoherent policies, inept official measures, burgeoning inflation and falling real income had turned the country into an economic shamble. But it was more than the difficulties of eking out a barely acceptable standard of living that had eroded the patience of a traditionally good-natured, quiescent people - it was also the humiliation of a way of life disfigured by corruption and fear.

The students were protesting not just against the death of their comrades but against the denial of their right to life by a totalitarian regime which deprived the present of meaningfulness and held out no hope for the future. And because the students' protests articulated the frustrations of the people at large, the demonstrations quickly grew into a nationwide movement. Some of its keenest supporters were businessmen who had developed the skills and the contacts necessary not only to survive but to prosper within the system. But their affluence offered them no genuine sense of security or fulfillment, and they could not but see that if they and their fellow citizens, regardless of economic status, were to achieve a worthwhile existence, an accountable administration was at least a necessary if not a sufficient condition. The people of Burma had wearied of a precarious state of passive apprehension where they were 'as water in the cupped hands' of the powers that be.

Emerald cools we may be. As water in cupped hands. But oh that we might be. As splinters of glass. In cupped hands.

Glass splinters, the smallest with its sharp, glinting power to defend itself against hands that try to crush, could be seen as a vivid symbol of the spark of courage that is an essential attribute of those who would free themselves from the grip of oppression. Bogyoke Aung San regarded himself as a revolutionary and searched tirelessly for answers to the problems that beset Burma during her times of trial. He exhorted the people to develop courage: 'Don't just depend on the courage and intrepidity of others. Each and every one of you must make sacrifices to become a hero possessed of courage and intrepidity. Then only shall we all be able to enjoy true freedom.'

The effort necessary to remain uncorrupted in an environment where fear is an integral part of everyday existence is not immediately apparent to those fortunate enough to live in states governed by the rule of law. Just laws do not merely prevent corruption by meting out impartial punishment to offenders. They also help to create a society in which people can fulfil the basic requirements necessary for the preservation of human dignity without recourse to corrupt practices. Where there are no such laws, the burden of upholding the principles of justice and common decency falls on the ordinary people. It is the cumulative effect on their sustained effort and steady endurance which will change a nation where reason and conscience are warped by fear into one where legal rules exist to promote man's desire for harmony and justice while restraining the less desirable destructive traits in his nature.

In an age when immense technological advances have created lethal weapons which could be, and are, used by the powerful and the unprincipled to dominate the weak and the helpless, there is a compelling need for a closer relationship between politics and ethics at both the national and international levels. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations proclaims that 'every individual and every organ of society' should strive to promote the basic rights and freedoms to which all human beings regardless of race, nationality or religion are entitled. But as long as there are governments whose authority is founded on coercion rather than on the mandate of the people, and interest groups which place short-term profits above long-term peace and prosperity, concerted international action to protect and promote human rights will remain at best a partially realized struggle. There will continue to be arenas of struggle where victims of oppression have to draw on their own inner resources to defend their inalienable rights as members of the human family.

The quintessential revolution is that of the spirit, born of an intellectual conviction of the need for change in those mental attitudes and values which shape the course of a nation's development. A revolution which aims merely at changing official policies and institutions with a view to an improvement in material conditions has little chance of genuine success. Without a revolution of the spirit, the forces which produced the iniquities of the old order would continue to be operative, posing a constant threat to

the process of reform and regeneration. It is not enough merely to call for freedom, democracy and human rights. There has to be a united determination to persevere in the struggle, to make sacrifices in the name of enduring truths, to resist the corrupting influences of desire, ill will, ignorance and fear.

Saints, it has been said, are the sinners who go on trying. So free men are the oppressed who go on trying and who in the process make themselves fit to bear the responsibilities and to uphold the disciplines which will maintain a free society. Among the basic freedoms to which men aspire that their lives might be full and uncramped, freedom from fear stands out as both a means and an end. A people who would build a nation in which strong, democratic institutions are firmly established as a guarantee against state-induced power must first learn to liberate their own minds from apathy and fear.

Always one to practice what he preached, Aung San himself constantly demonstrated courage - not just the physical sort but the kind that enabled him to speak the truth, to stand by his word, to accept criticism, to admit his faults, to correct his mistakes, to respect the opposition, to parley with the enemy and to let people be the judge of his worthiness as a leader. It is for such moral courage that he will always be loved and respected in Burma - not merely as a warrior hero but as the inspiration and conscience of the nation. The words used by Jawaharlal Nehru to describe Mahatma Gandhi could well be applied to Aung San:

'The essence of his teaching was fearlessness and truth, and action allied to these, always keeping the welfare of the masses in view.'

Gandhi, that great apostle of non-violence, and Aung San, the founder of a national army, were very different personalities, but as there is an inevitable sameness about the challenges of authoritarian rule anywhere at any time, so there is a similarity in the intrinsic qualities of those who rise up to meet the challenge. Nehru, who considered the instillation of courage in the people of India one of Gandhi's greatest achievements, was a political modernist, but as he assessed the needs for a twentieth-century movement for independence, he found himself looking back to the philosophy of ancient India: 'The greatest gift for an individual or a nation was abhaya, fearlessness, not merely bodily courage but absence of fear from the mind.'

Fearlessness may be a gift but perhaps more precious is the courage acquired through endeavour, courage that comes from cultivating the habit of refusing to let fear dictate one's actions, courage that could be described as 'grace under pressure' - grace which is renewed repeatedly in the face of harsh, unrelenting pressure.

Within a system which denies the existence of basic human rights, fear tends to be the order of the day. Fear of imprisonment, fear of torture, fear of death, fear of losing

friends, family, property or means of livelihood, fear of poverty, fear of isolation, fear of failure. A most insidious form of fear is that which masquerades as common sense or even wisdom, condemning as foolish, reckless, insignificant or futile the small, daily acts of courage which help to preserve man's self-respect and inherent human dignity. It is not easy for a people conditioned by fear under the iron rule of the principle that might is right to free themselves from the enervating miasma of fear. Yet even under the most crushing state machinery courage rises up again and again, for fear is not the natural state of civilized man.

The wellspring of courage and endurance in the face of unbridled power is generally a firm belief in the sanctity of ethical principles combined with a historical sense that despite all setbacks the condition of man is set on an ultimate course for both spiritual and material advancement. It is his capacity for self-improvement and self-redemption which most distinguishes man from the mere brute. At the root of human responsibility is the concept of perfection, the urge to achieve it, the intelligence to find a path towards it, and the will to follow that path if not to the end at least the distance needed to rise above individual limitations and environmental impediments. It is man's vision of a world fit for rational, civilized humanity which leads him to dare and to suffer to build societies free from want and fear. Concepts such as truth, justice and compassion cannot be dismissed as trite when these are often the only bulwarks which stand against ruthless power.

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World Summit of Nobel Laureates for Peace

<https://www.nobelpeacesummit.com/project/aung-san-su-kyi/>

Aung San Suu Kyi



She was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her non-violent struggle for democracy and human rights.

Her father was General Aung San (assassinated in 1947), a hero of the war of independence, considered to be the founding father of modern-day Burma. In 1960, Suu Kyi moved abroad. She studied political science in Delhi and later philosophy, politics and economics at Oxford University.

Her return to Burma in 1988 coincided with pro-democratic demonstrations against the then country's dictator, Ne Win. Ms Kyi announced "the second struggle for independence" and soon became the leader of the National League for Democracy (NLD). Despite the party's victory in the 1990 parliamentary election, the junta refused to surrender power.

Suu Kyi suffered constant repression. Between 1989 and 2010 she spent a total of 15 years in house arrest. In 2011, the process of Burma democratisation started. In March 2013 the NLD congress decided that Suu Kyi should keep her leadership role.

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https://www.idea.int/about-us/board_of_advisers/aung-san-suu-kyi

Aung San Suu Kyi

Former Board Member

Aung San Suu Kyi is the State Counsellor and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar. She is also General Secretary of the National League for Democracy and a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate.

A symbol for democracy in the military-run state of Myanmar and a daughter of a national hero, Aung San Suu Kyi worked as an

Assistant Secretary at the United Nations (1969-71) and as a Research Officer for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bhutan.

In 1988 she became General Secretary of the National League for Democracy which won a landslide victory in the national elections in 1990 but this was not recognized by the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council and she remained under house arrest, despite widespread international condemnation, until her final release in November 2010.

Aung San Suu Kyi holds a Masters degree from Oxford University in Philosophy, Politics and Economics, and is the author of numerous books and articles including *Aung San of Burma: A Biographical Portrait by his Daughter*, *Burma and India: Some Aspects of Intellectual Life under Colonialism* and *Freedom from Fear and Other Writings*.

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Honorary Degrees Congregation
The University of Hong Kong

<https://www4.hku.hk/hongrads/graduates/aung-san-suu-kyi-aung-san-suu-kyi>

Biography





186th

Congregation
(2012)

Aung San Suu Kyi

Doctor of Laws

honoris causa

Citation Speech

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Burma's pro-democracy leader and Nobel Peace laureate, is a world-renowned figure who symbolises the struggle of Burma's people to be free. She was born in 1945, the daughter of Burma's independence hero, General Aung San, who was assassinated when she was two years old.

Aung San Suu Kyi was educated in Burma, India, and the United Kingdom. After living for many years in Oxford, she returned to Burma in 1988 to nurse her dying mother. She soon became engaged in the country's nationwide democracy uprising, which the military regime suppressed with brute force. She was a key figure in forming a new pro-democracy party, the National League for Democracy (NLD).

As NLD General Secretary, Aung San Suu Kyi gave numerous speeches calling for freedom and democracy. Her party won the 1990 general election in a landslide victory, but was not allowed to take power. Aung San Suu Kyi herself was placed under house arrest in 1989, and spent fifteen of the next twenty years in detention.

Aung San Suu Kyi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991 and was finally released from house arrest in 2010.

In May 2011, Aung San Suu Kyi had a dialogue with HKU students, staff and alumni through a real-time televised broadcast as a featured speaker of the Centenary Distinguished Lecture series.

In recognition of her commitment to non-violent struggle for democracy and human rights, the University has resolved to confer upon her the degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa*.

(☺)@@@@@@@@@@@@(☺)

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FOREIGN RELATIONS

<https://www.cfr.org/blog/aung-san-suu-kyis-major-speech-rakhine-state>

Aung San Suu Kyi's Major Speech on Rakhine State

Post by Joshua Kurlantzick
September 19, 2017 5:22 pm (EST)



Myanmar State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi delivers a speech to the nation on Rakhine and the Rohingya situation, in Naypyitaw, Myanmar on September 19, 2017.

In a major address to the Myanmar public, and the international community today, Aung San Suu Kyi gave her first significant speech about the ongoing crisis in Rakhine State. This crisis has now become probably the worst humanitarian catastrophe in East Asia. Reports suggest that people have been fleeing Rakhine State at a faster rate than in any refugee exodus since 1971. Over 400,000 people have fled Rakhine State into Bangladesh in recent weeks. The UN has referred to the crisis as ethnic cleansing, and there seems to be no letup in the Myanmar military's offensive in Rakhine

State. Although President Trump did not mention the Rohingya in his address at the United Nations, Secretary of State Tillerson called Suu Kyi about the crisis. Other countries that historically have been strong backers of Suu Kyi, including Britain and Sweden, have expressed growing concern, and called private UN sessions about the crisis.

Suu Kyi decided not to come to this week's United Nations General Assembly, and instead gave a major speech in Naypyidaw about the crisis. The speech confirmed much of what has already become evident about her approach to Rakhine State. That approach, reflected in this speech, is one in which she downplays the crisis, focuses instead on her other domestic priorities, refuses to recognize the Rohingya as citizens of Myanmar, plays to overall public opinion in Myanmar, and mostly defers to the military.

Suu Kyi sees her major priorities as addressing insurgencies in the north and northeast of the country, as I mentioned in a [recent Washington Post article](#); she views the Rakhine crisis, however horrific, as just one among many challenges in border lands. The speech reflected these priorities. She, like many ethnic Burmans, seems to view the Rohingya as outsiders—she referred in the speech to “Muslims” in Rakhine State but did not refer to them as Rohingya.

She also seems to understand the political calculus in Myanmar; most of the population, as well as the army commanders, probably are supportive of the army's scorched earth approach to Rakhine State—or at least do not mind it. [Crowds rallied](#) in central Myanmar to hear and cheer Suu Kyi's speech; the domestic context of how her approach to Rakhine is viewed is vastly different from the international context.

Although Suu Kyi did indeed intend the speech for international audiences, and spoke in English, she only generally condemned all rights violations. She suggested that Naypyidaw did not understand the causes of the refugee outflow, basically pardoning the military for atrocities that are largely to blame for the exodus. She also seemed to suggest that the situation on the ground in Rakhine was becoming more peaceful and that many Rohingya were not fleeing—a dubious claim—and this might be because the situation in Rakhine is not as dire as the world believes. There is little evidence to support the idea that the armed forces are creating peace in Rakhine. She further added that Myanmar did not fear investigations into the crisis, even though journalists and aid workers have largely been kept out of northern Rakhine.

There is political calculus by Suu Kyi in this speech. The military commander-in-chief dominates security policy, and she may feel she can little sway what the armed forces do in Rakhine anyway. Most of the Myanmar population probably is uninterested in Rakhine State—at best.

But the speech was still even less than Suu Kyi perhaps could have said to an international audience, and it understates her own influence both domestically and internationally. Though the military has control of security policy, Suu Kyi's immense popularity at home means that she could use the bully pulpit to change minds and indirectly influence the armed forces—and demonstrate that the civilian government is not totally prostrate to the army. She did not try to do any of those things today.



<https://liberal-international.org/people/aung-san-su-kyi/>



Aung San Suu Kyi

Awarded 1995

Since 1988, Daw Aung Sam Suu Kyi has been the leader of the Burmese opposition, the Secretary General of the National League for Democracy (NLD).

She was awarded the LI Prize for Freedom in 1995.

From 1989 to 1995 she was kept under house arrest by the SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) under martial law as a prisoner of conscience.

In addition to previous countless awards and honors, she has received the IRC (International Rescue Committee) Freedom Award (1995), as well as the Pearl S. Buck Woman of the Year Award (a prize from a non-political child assistance organisation located in Pennsylvania). She eventually managed to receive the award, though two previous meetings had been prevented by the SLORC.

She sees her struggle in a spiritual way and she demands peaceful democratic reforms. Her convictions are entirely non-violent. She fights against ignorance with a great understanding for people and the situations in which they must live. She campaigns for

changes through dialogue, but the government refuses dialogue until she softens her attitude towards the rulers.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is nevertheless very active. She gives interviews, seminars, and she has also made some video tapes. She published several books: *Freedom from Fear and Other Writings* (1995), *The Voice of Hope* (1997), and *Letters from Burma* (1998). The *Mainichi Daily News* in English and the *Mainichi Daily Shimbun* in Japanese has carried her weekly series, 'Letter from Burma', also published in *The Voice of Burma* during the end of 1995 and 1996. The Japanese newspaper won the Shimbun Award of 1996 for it.

Since her release, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has continued to challenge the junta, causing tensions to increase considerably. She used to address the crowd on the street and followers would soon gather around her house, but the military government cracked down harshly on such free speech forums. Moreover, she has advised tourists to cancel their visits until Burma becomes a land more inclined to freedom. She has also appealed to investors to wait for better times rather than support present-day injustice. These appeals served to increase tensions, particularly because economic sanctions were effectively taken against Burma. In April 1997, an armed group linked to the junta attacked her car.

Last summer she stepped up her campaign, demanding that the government allow the legitimate members of parliament, elected in 1990, to take their seats. She also appealed to soldiers to join the democratic movement. The government reacted with another harsh crackdown on the party, arresting hundreds of followers and supporters. She attempted four times to break a government-imposed travel ban and tried to leave the capital in order to meet her supporters. She was stopped each time by the SLORC – by then renamed into SPDC (State Peace and Development Council) – forces and spent up to a week waiting in her car. Health concerns were expressed because of these stand-offs.

As a result, several countries, including the US, took a position against the Burmese authorities, calling on Burma to stop human rights violations. Officials from Japan and Germany have repeatedly demanded to meet with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, but have been refused the authorisation.

The Burmese authorities have waged a campaign in the hope of discrediting her, charging her with 'trickery'. She was also attacked because of her marriage to a British national, Michael Aris, and therefore accused of serving foreign interests. She was not allowed to see her husband for several years, not even when he was passing away in the spring of 1999.



Aung San Suu Kyi

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aung_San_Suu_Kyi

Daw

Aung San Suu Kyi

အောင်ဆန်းစုကြည်



Aung San Suu Kyi in 2017

State Counsellor of Myanmar

In office

6 April 2016 – 1 February 2021

President

- [Htin Kyaw](#)
- [Win Myint](#)

Preceded by *Office established*

Succeeded by [Min Aung Hlaing](#) (as [Chairman of the State Administration Council](#))

Leader of the Opposition

In office

2 May 2012 – 29 January 2016

President [Thein Sein](#)

Preceded by Sai Hla Kyaw

Succeeded by Thein Sein

show

Ministerial offices
2016–2021

General Secretary of the [National League for Democracy](#)

Incumbent

Assumed office

27 September 1988

Preceded by *Office established*

Chairperson of the National League for Democracy	
In office	
13 December 2011 – 28 March 2023	
Preceded by	<i>Office established</i>
Succeeded by	<i>Office abolished</i>
Member of the House of Representatives for Kawhmu	
In office	
2 May 2012 – 30 March 2016	
Preceded by	Soe Tint
Succeeded by	<i>Vacant</i>
Majority	46,73 (71.38%)
Personal details	
Born	19 June 1945 (age 79) Rangoon , British Burma
Political party	National League for Democracy
Spouse	Michael Aris
	(m. 1972; died 1999)
Children	2, including Alexander Aris
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aung San Khin Kyi
Relatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aung San Oo (brother) Ba Win (uncle) Sein Win (cousin)
Residence	54 University Avenue
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Delhi (BA) St Hugh's College, Oxford (BA) SOAS University of London (MPhil)^[1]
Occupation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> politician diplomat author pro-democracy activist
Awards	Full list
Signature	

Aung San Suu Kyi (born 19 June 1945) is a Burmese politician, diplomat, author, and political activist who served as [State Counsellor of Myanmar](#) and [Minister of Foreign Affairs](#) from 2016 to 2021. She has served as the general secretary of the [National League for Democracy](#) (NLD) since the party's founding in 1988 and was registered as its chairperson while it was a legal party from 2011 to 2023. She played a vital role in [Myanmar's transition](#) from [military junta](#) to partial democracy in the 2010s.

The youngest daughter of [Aung San, Father of the Nation](#) of modern-day Myanmar, and [Khin Kyi](#), Aung San Suu Kyi was born in [Rangoon, British Burma](#). After graduating from the [University of Delhi](#) in 1964 and [St Hugh's College, Oxford](#) in 1968, she worked at the [United Nations](#) for three years. She married [Michael Aris](#) in 1972, with whom she had two children.

Aung San Suu Kyi rose to prominence in the [8888 Uprising](#) of 8 August 1988 and became the General Secretary of the NLD, which she had newly formed with the help of several retired army officials who criticised the military junta. In the [1990 general election](#), NLD won 81% of the seats in Parliament, but the results were nullified, as the [State Peace and Development Council](#) (SPDC), the military government, refused to hand over power, resulting in an international outcry. She had been detained before the elections and remained under [house arrest](#) for almost 15 of the 21 years from 1989 to 2010, becoming one of the world's most prominent [political prisoners](#). In 1999, [Time](#) magazine named her one of the "Children of [Gandhi](#)" and his spiritual heir to [nonviolence](#). She survived an assassination attempt in the 2003 [Depayin massacre](#) when at least 70 people associated with the NLD were killed.

Her party boycotted the [2010 general election](#), resulting in a decisive victory for the military-backed [Union Solidarity and Development Party](#) (USDP). Aung San Suu Kyi became a member of the [Pyithu Hluttaw](#) (House of Representatives) while her party won 43 of the 45 vacant seats in the [2012 by-elections](#). In the [2015 general election](#), her party won a [landslide victory](#), taking 86% of the seats in the [Pyidaungsu Hluttaw](#), well more than the 67% [supermajority](#) needed to ensure that its preferred candidates were elected [president](#) and [vice president](#) in the [Presidential Electoral College](#). Although she was prohibited from becoming the president due to a clause in the [Myanmar Constitution](#)—her late husband and children are foreign citizens—she assumed the newly created role of [State Counsellor of Myanmar](#), a role akin to a [prime minister](#) or a [head of government](#).

When she ascended to the office of state counsellor, Aung San Suu Kyi drew criticism from several countries, organisations and figures over Myanmar's inaction in response to the [Rohingya genocide](#) in [Rakhine State](#) and refusal to acknowledge that the [Tatmadaw](#) (armed forces) had committed massacres. Under her leadership, Myanmar also drew criticism for prosecutions of journalists. In 2019, Aung San Suu Kyi appeared in the [International Court of Justice](#) where she defended the Myanmar military against allegations of genocide against the [Rohingya people](#).

Aung San Suu Kyi, whose party had won the November [2020 general election](#), was arrested on 1 February 2021 following [a coup d'état](#) that returned the Tatmadaw to power and sparked [protests across the country](#). Several charges were filed against her, and on 6 December 2021, she was sentenced to four years in prison on two of them. Later, on 10 January 2022, she was sentenced to an additional four years on another set of charges. On 12 October 2022, she was convicted of two further charges of [corruption](#) and she was sentenced to two terms of three

years' imprisonment to be served concurrent to each other. On 30 December 2022, her trials ended with another conviction and an additional sentence of seven years' imprisonment for corruption. Aung San Suu Kyi's final sentence was of 33 years in prison, later reduced to 27 years. The [United Nations](#), most European countries, and the United States condemned the arrests, trials, and sentences as politically motivated.

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List of Awards and Honours received by Aung San Suu Kyi





https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_awards_and_honours_received_by_Aung_San_Suu_Kyi

[Aung San Suu Kyi](#) has received numerous honours and awards, including the 1991 [Nobel Peace Prize](#) and the [Presidential Medal of Freedom](#), throughout her life for her peace and freedom activism in her homeland of [Myanmar](#). However, since the start of the [Rohingya genocide](#) in 2016, many of these honours and awards have been revoked due to her perceived inaction to stop the crisis.






Currently held



Orders, decorations and medals

Foreign

-  Honorary Companion of the [Order of Australia](#) (AC) - Civil Division (24 May 1996).
-  [Presidential Medal of Freedom](#) (6 December 2000)
-  Commander of the National [Order of the Legion of Honour](#) (21 January 2012)
-  [Sultan of Brunei Golden Jubilee Medal](#) (6 October 2017)

Other distinctions

-  [Nobel Peace Prize](#) (14 October 1991)
-  [Olof Palme Prize](#) (2005)
-  [Congressional Gold Medal](#) (6 May 2008)
-  [Chatham House](#) Prize (2011)
-  The [Wallenberg Medal](#) from the [University of Michigan](#) (2011)

Location	Date	School	Degree
 England	1967	St. Hugh's College, Oxford	Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Philosophy, politics and economics
 England	1988	SOAS, University of London	Master of Philosophy (M.Phil) in Burmese literature candidate

Scholastic

University Degrees




Chancellor, visitor, governor, rector, and fellowships

Location	Date	School	Position
 Japan	1985 – 1986	Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University	Visiting scholar
 India	February 1987 – February 1989	Indian Institute of Advanced Study	Fellow
 England	1990 –	St Hugh's College, Oxford	Honorary Fellow
 England	1991 – 9 November 2017	LSE Students' Union	Honorary President
 England	2009 –	Liverpool John Moores University	Honorary Fellow
 Connecticut	2012 – 2013	Timothy Dwight College at Yale University	Chubb Fellow
 Japan	15 April 2013 –	Kyoto University	Honorary Fellow
 England	–	St Antony's College, Oxford	Honorary Fellow



Honorary degrees

Honorary degrees


Location	Date	School	Degree	Status
 Ontario	November 1993	University of Toronto	Doctor of Laws (LL.D)	
 District of Columbia	January 1997	American University	Doctor of Laws (LL.D)	
 Czech Republic	10 January 1997	Charles University	Doctor of Laws (LL.D)	

 Australia	1997	<u>University of Technology Sydney</u>	<u>Doctor of Letters</u> (D.Litt)	
 South Africa	1997	<u>University of Natal</u>	<u>Doctor of Laws</u> (LL.D)	
 England	1998	<u>University of Bath</u>	<u>Doctor of Laws</u> (LL.D)	
 England	1998	<u>University of Bristol</u>	<u>Doctor of Laws</u> (LL.D)	
 Australia	1998	<u>University of Melbourne</u>	<u>Doctor of Laws</u> (LL.D)	
 New Zealand	1999	<u>Victoria University of Wellington</u>	<u>Doctor of Laws</u> (LL.D)	
 Newfoundland and Labrador	May 2004	<u>Memorial University of Newfoundland</u>	<u>Doctor of Laws</u> (LL.D)	
 Northern Ireland	2009	<u>Ulster University</u>	<u>Doctor of Laws</u> (LL.D)	
 South Africa	October 2011	<u>University of Johannesburg</u>	<u>Doctor of Philosophy</u> (Ph.D)	
 Maryland	2012	<u>Johns Hopkins University</u>	<u>Doctor of Humane Letters</u> (DHL)	
 Hong Kong	15 March 2012	<u>University of Hong Kong</u>	<u>Doctor of Laws</u> (LL.D)	
 Republic of Ireland	18 June 2012	<u>Trinity College Dublin</u>	<u>Doctor of Laws</u> (LL.D)	
 England	20 June 2012	<u>University of Oxford</u>	<u>Doctor of Civil Law</u> (DCL)	
 California	September 2012	<u>University of San Francisco</u>	Doctorate	

 Australia	27 November 2013	University of Sydney	Doctor of Laws (LL.D)	
 Australia	30 November 2013	Monash University	Doctor of Laws (LL.D)	
 Australia	2013	Australian National University	Doctor of Letters (D.Litt)	
 Taiwan	12 December 2015	National Chiao Tung University	Doctorate	
 Japan	3 November 2016	Kyoto University	Doctorate	





Memberships and fellowships

Country	Date	Organisation	Position
 Scotland	10 February 2015 –	Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh	Honorary Fellow



Freedom of the City

-  **1994**: Rome (Collected on 27 October 2013)
-  **13 May 2011**: Brighton and Hove






Revoked or status otherwise withdrawn



Honorary citizenship

- [Honorary Canadian citizenship](#) (awarded 2007, due to concerns over the [Rohingya genocide](#), revoked 27 September 2018 by unanimous vote of the House of Commons of the [Parliament of Canada](#), with the unanimous concurrence of the [Senate of Canada](#) on 2 October 2018). She is the first recipient of honorary Canadian citizenship to have the honour withdrawn.

Distinctions of societies and associations

-  [Sakharov Prize](#) (1990), rescinded on 10 September 2020
-  [Amnesty International Ambassador of Conscience Award](#) (2009), rescinded on 11 November 2018
-  The Elie Wiesel Award from the [United States Holocaust Memorial Museum](#) (2012), rescinded on 6 March 2018.

Honorary degrees

-  Ontario [Queen's University Doctor of Laws](#) (LL.D; awarded 1995, revoked 30 November 2018)
-  Ontario [Carleton University Doctor of Laws](#) (LL.D; awarded 2011, revoked 19 October 2018)

Memberships and fellowships

-  United Kingdom Hon. Member of [UNISON](#) (suspended 20 September 2017)

Freedoms of cities

-  **1997**: Oxford (Revoked on 27 November 2017)
-  **1 November 1999**: Dublin (Revoked on 13 December 2017)
-  **2004**: Paris (Revoked on 13 December 2018)
-  **2005**: Edinburgh (Revoked on 23 August 2018)
-  **2005**: Galway ([Galway City Council](#) revoked Freedom on 11 February 2019)
-  **2005**: Sheffield (Revoked in November 2017)
-  **2008**: Dundee (Revoked in September 2018)
-  **2009**: Glasgow (Revoked on 3 November 2017)
-  **18 June 2011**: Newcastle (Revoked in August 2018)
-  **May 2017**: London (Revoked on 5 March 2020)

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Amnesty International

Withdraws human rights award from Aung San Suu Kyi

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2018/11/amnesty-withdraws-award-from-aung-san-suu-kyi/>

Amnesty International announced today that it has withdrawn its highest honour, the Ambassador of Conscience Award, from Aung San Suu Kyi, in light of the Myanmar leader's shameful betrayal of the values she once stood for.

Today, we are profoundly dismayed that you no longer represent a symbol of hope, courage, and the undying defence of human rights.

Kumi Naidoo, Secretary General, Amnesty International

On 11 November, Amnesty International's Secretary General [Kumi Naidoo wrote to Aung San Suu Kyi](#) to inform her the organization is revoking the 2009 award. Half way through her term in office, and eight years after her release from house arrest, Naidoo expressed the organization's disappointment that she had not used her political and moral

authority to safeguard human rights, justice or equality in Myanmar, citing her apparent indifference to atrocities committed by the Myanmar military and increasing intolerance of freedom of expression.

"As an Amnesty International Ambassador of Conscience, our expectation was that you would continue to use your moral authority to speak out against injustice wherever you saw it, not least within Myanmar itself," wrote Kumi Naidoo.

"Today, we are profoundly dismayed that you no longer represent a symbol of hope, courage, and the undying defence of human rights. Amnesty International cannot justify your continued status as a recipient of the Ambassador of Conscience award and so with great sadness we are hereby withdrawing it from you."

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Aung San Suu Kyi Moved From Prison to House Arrest: "Very Hot Weather"

<https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/jailed-myanmar-leader-aung-suu-kyi-moved-from-prison-to-house-arrest-5460905>

The 78-year-old Nobel laureate is serving a 27-year sentence for a host of criminal convictions ranging from corruption to breaching Covid-19 rules.



Suu Kyi has largely been hidden from view since the military detained her in 2021.

Yangon:

Jailed Myanmar democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi has been moved from prison to house arrest, a military official said Wednesday, as the junta announced a heatwave had prompted measures to protect inmates.

The 78-year-old Nobel laureate is serving a 27-year sentence for a host of criminal convictions ranging from corruption to breaching Covid-19 rules.

Suu Kyi has largely been hidden from view since the military detained her as they seized power in a 2021 coup, and she has reportedly suffered health problems.

A military official, speaking on condition of anonymity because he is not authorised to speak to the media, said Suu Kyi and former president Win Myint had been moved from prison to house arrest.

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Aung San Suu Kyi

https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Aung_San_Suu_Kyi

The beloved leader of [Burma](#)'s democracy movement, **Aung San Suu Kyi** (often affectionately referred to as either "Aunty," or "The Lady") was born June 19, 1945 in what was then known as Rangoon, Burma (now: Yangon, [Myanmar](#)). Suu Kyi is a nonviolent pro-democracy activist and leader of the National League for Democracy in Myanmar (Burma). In 2016 she became the first State Counsellor, a position akin to a prime minister. A devout Buddhist, Suu Kyi won the Rafto Prize and the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought in 1990 and in 1991 was awarded the [Nobel Peace Prize](#) for her peaceful and non-violent struggle under a repressive military dictatorship.

General [Aung San](#), the country's founding father, broke with his culture's traditions in the naming of his daughter. In Burmese historical tradition, children are seldom named after their parents. However, he gave his name to his two sons as well as to his daughter. To balance the masculinity of the name Aung San (meaning victory), he used both his mother's and wife's names as well. Aung San Suu Kyi (pronounced "Ong Sahn Soo Chee"), means "a bright collection of strange victories." This powerful name seems to have been one of great destiny, which she has gracefully carried.

Aung San Suu Kyi has become a symbol of peaceful resistance in one of the most oppressive nations on Earth. As such, many have come to regard her as the "[Nelson Mandela](#) of south-east Asia."

Beyond the mere cause of democracy, more fundamentally she reveals the potential for women in positions of leadership, and as peacemakers, and she makes bright the power and potential to be derived from following spiritual principles without compromise.

Contents

- 1_Early Life and Education
- 2_Political Beginnings
- 3_Detention in Myanmar
- 4_Release and Political Activity
 - 5_Personal Life
 - 5.1_Honors and Awards
 - 5.2_Writing
 - 5.3_Quotes
 - 6_International Support
- 7_The Bommersvik Declarations
 - 7.1_Bommersvik Declaration I
 - 7.2_Bommersvik Declaration II
- 8_Notes
- 9_References
- 10_External links
- 11 Credits

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Jettisoning

Aung San Suu Kyi

Will Be a Mistake for India

<https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/jettisoning-aung-san-suu-kyi-will-be-a-mistake-for-india/>

"It is not power that corrupts, but fear. Fear of losing power corrupts those who wield it and fear of the scourge of power corrupts those who are subject to it."

<<< Aung San Suu Kyi in 1991

Make no mistake: judging Aung San Suu Kyi in light of the above statement may be a bit difficult at present, particularly in the wake of the Myanmar army's brutal suppression of the Rohingya community. The Noble Laureate first remained silent, then defended her country's army in international fora. Even as condemnation of her stance poured out from different corners of the globe, India remained in a predicament. Suu Kyi is and will always remain dear to New Delhi; however, strategic interests demand that the Tatmadaw (as the Myanmar army is called) not be alienated.

The Noble Laureate's present incarceration at the hands of the army is tragic. The history of democracy in South Asia will however vouch for Suu Kyi's continued relevance to democratic movements around the world.

At this critical juncture, New Delhi is not so sure of itself. A few days back, India shied away from voting on a resolution in the United Nations General Assembly which condemned the military coup in Myanmar and called for a halt of arms sales to that country. The resolution and its timing are significant. They indicate that Suu Kyi is again winning over sympathies of the western hemisphere, which she had lost after her studied silence over Rohingya massacres. On the face of it, supporting the resolution was the only thing the Indian people could expect. But the corridors of power in New Delhi want to keep the Tatmadaw in good humor. Concern for security in India's northeast is the primary reason. There are other factors too. But for decades, India has not been able to formulate a clear-cut Myanmar policy.

It is true that the Tatmadaw has cooperated with India in flushing out some northeastern Indian ultras from Burmese jungles. Last year, it had even deported quite a few cadres of the Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) of Manipur and United Liberation Front (ULFA) of Assam to India. It has also raided the jungle headquarters of the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (NSCN) – Khaplang faction in the northern Sagaing region.

But there is another side of the story. The Tatmadaw is known to be hard on the NSCN (Khaplang) group, but it is inexplicably soft on the other faction, NSCN (Issac-Muivah). For many years it has allowed the PLA, another secessionist organization of Manipur, to maintain bases in the Taka area near the Chindwin River. The reason is obvious. The Myanmar army does not want to lose all its cards, which can otherwise be played against India at some suitable point in the future.

For now, the Tatmadaw will maintain good working relations with India, because it is wary of Suu Kyi's proximity to China, which developed in the wake of the Noble Laureate's estrangement with Western countries. Another factor is Beijing's open support to some ethnic Burmese insurgent armies operating in the north and northeastern part of Myanmar. In the past, Chinese army and air force units staged open shows of strength following Tatmadaw raids on several hideouts of the Kokangs, who are Mandarin-speaking Han Chinese. Even the Myanmar army has officially hinted that ethnic insurgents were 'illegally' getting arms from China.

It is not known how long Aung San Suu Kyi will be detained by the army. Some charges, whatever their worth, have been brought against her. It appears that she may have to spend a long time in prison unless intense international pressure forces the army to release her.

Now is the time for India to come out of her indecisiveness on the matter, as certain sections of Myanmar army are showing signs of restiveness. Already around 800 soldiers in various ranks have deserted the Tatmadaw. Moreover, there are reports that armies of ethnic insurgent groups like the Kachins, Karens, etc., are coming together to give a united fight against the Myanmar army on the issue of restoring democracy. These ethnic armies maintain good relations with the ultras of northeastern India, and on previous occasions provided safe corridors for Indian secessionist bands to reach China's Yunnan Province. Being too soft on the Myanmar army might ultimately invite troubles for New Delhi, as it threatens to push ethnic Burmese insurgents toward the northeastern Indian ultras again.

In order to ensure the success of its Act East policy, New Delhi must chart out a meaningful and proactive Burma policy, not just a laid-back attitude to remain idle and casually watch developments in Yangon. This is what has been happening since the dethroning of U Nu, Burma's democratically elected prime minister, by General Ne Win in 1962. Although U Nu was a great friend of Jawaharlal Nehru and concurred with the latter on almost every international issue, Nehru chose to remain silent keeping in mind two things – the long international border that India has with Burma, and the serious Naga insurgency. Although Aung San Suu Kyi has close personal relations with different layers of Indian society and its government, she has not received adequate support from India in her struggle for restoration of democracy in Burma.

New Delhi must remember that a democratic Myanmar will help strengthen democratic institutions and sentiments in large parts of northeastern India. There can be no better model than Aung San Suu Kyi in achieving this.



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